

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 9, 2006

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 99

Introduced by Senator Ortiz

February 24, 2006

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 99—Relative to honoring the Sisters of Mercy.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 99, as amended, Ortiz. Honoring the Sisters of Mercy.

This measure would request the approval from the Department of General Services and ~~Capitol Park Master Plan group~~ *the State Review Committee, formed pursuant to this measure*, to construct a memorial honoring the Sisters of Mercy in the State Capitol Park. This measure would require the construction of this memorial to be funded privately, and would allow the Sisters of Mercy to design and construct the memorial upon approval.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Founded in Ireland by Catherine McAuley in
2 1831 to serve those who were poor, sick, uneducated, and in
3 misery, the Sisters of Mercy, led by Mary Baptist Russell and
4 seven other Sisters of Mercy, left Kinsale, Ireland and traveled to
5 California in 1854; and
6 WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy arrived in San Francisco on
7 December 8, 1854, to respond to the city's greatest needs: the
8 untended sick, the destitute, abused women, orphaned children,
9 and the uneducated. Known as "walking nuns," they visited
10 shanties and county hospitals and were the first females to visit a

1 state penitentiary, San Quentin prison, and anywhere misery was
2 found; and

3 WHEREAS, During the Gold Rush Days, on October 2, 1857,
4 and just seven years after California became an official state,
5 Mary Baptist Russell and four Sisters of Mercy came to
6 California's capital, beginning a legacy of service spanning 150
7 years; and

8 WHEREAS, Three days after arriving in Sacramento, a school
9 on 7th and K Streets was opened with 65 students, which swelled
10 to 120 a few months later; and

11 WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy purchased land in the heart
12 of the city to build a school. Passage of the "Capitol Bill" in 1860
13 resulted in the sale of that property to the state for its original
14 price of \$4,850. This is now the site of the State Capitol
15 Building; and

16 WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy moved to 9th and G Streets
17 where they opened the St. Joseph's Academy, the center of their
18 works for more than 80 years; and

19 WHEREAS, In December, 1861, an epic flood kept parts of
20 Sacramento under water for six months. Moving in and out of
21 their second story windows, the Sisters of Mercy went by boat to
22 minister to flood victims at the city pavilion, becoming
23 Sacramento's first visiting nurses; and

24 WHEREAS, Before 1896, Sacramento had no private pay
25 hospital. Those who were not indigent or employed by Southern
26 Pacific had to travel to San Francisco for care. The Sisters of
27 Mercy responded to the challenge, and in 1895 bought Ridge
28 Home, a small sanitarium at 22nd and R Streets. This was soon
29 replaced by Mater Misericordiae Hospital in 1897; and

30 WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy resumed caring for orphans
31 in 1900 when Mrs. Leland Stanford donated the Stanford
32 Mansion to the Sacramento diocese for that purpose. With only
33 15 professed "Sisters," the community ran a thriving academy, an
34 orphanage, and a hospital; and

35 WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy, experiencing crises such as
36 malaria, typhoid, and consumption, were challenged by the flu
37 pandemic of 1918. Hospitals were jammed. At its peak, 400 new
38 cases a day were diagnosed. Of the 55 nurses in training, only 19
39 were healthy. With all space needed for sick adults, the Sisters of

1 Mercy volunteered to set up a special nursery for tiny flu victims
2 at Stanford Home; and

3 WHEREAS, At the end of World War I, land was purchased at
4 40th and J Streets, for the site of today's Mercy General Hospital,
5 which opened on February 11, 1925, a symbol of the Sisters of
6 Mercy's commitment to the well-being of the city; and

7 WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy have since spread their
8 service to towns large and small throughout California.
9 Recognizing they could do more through collaboration, in 1986
10 the Mercy Sisters of Auburn and Burlingame together established
11 Catholic Healthcare West, a nonprofit health care system with
12 over 40 member hospitals; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1991, the Sisters of Mercy in Sacramento
14 opened a new chapter in their story joining with Sisters of Mercy
15 throughout the United States and 11 countries to form the
16 Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, with more than
17 22,000 Sisters and associates to better serve today's needs; and

18 WHEREAS, Today, there are five free health clinics in the
19 greater Sacramento region, several educational programs, and
20 multiple affordable housing communities through Mercy
21 Housing California. Mercy, in the greater Sacramento region has
22 six hospitals, employing more than 7,000 employees and caring
23 for thousands of patients each year; and

24 WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy provided the State of
25 California's first health, education, and welfare programs for the
26 poor and have been commemorated with a small, inconspicuous
27 plaque located near the north entrance to the State Capitol
28 building, ~~which is to be removed~~ *will be relocated* in the near
29 future due to construction in that area; and

30 WHEREAS, A memorial in the State Capitol Park will provide
31 a more appropriate "living tribute" to the Sisters of Mercy's
32 continuing partnership with the City of Sacramento and State of
33 California, educating visitors to the park of this strong history
34 and alliance; and

35 WHEREAS, Funds for the construction of the memorial will
36 be provided through private contributions; ~~and now, therefore, be~~
37 *it*

38 *RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF*
39 *CALIFORNIA, THE ASSEMBLY THEREOF CONCURRING,*
40 *The Legislature hereby requests the construction of a tribute to*

1 *the Sisters of Mercy in the Capitol Historic Region; and be it*
2 *further*

3 *RESOLVED, That a State Review Committee be formed,*
4 *consisting of representatives from the Department of General*
5 *Services, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Assembly,*
6 *and the Senate. This review committee shall work with the Sisters*
7 *of Mercy to identify an appropriate location for the memorial in*
8 *Capitol Park and review a memorial design. The actual*
9 *construction of the statue shall not proceed without the Sisters of*
10 *Mercy meeting all requirements of construction on state*
11 *property; and be it further*

12 *RESOLVED, That the Department of General Services work*
13 *with and consult with the Sisters of Mercy to accomplish the*
14 *following goals: review of the preliminary design plans to*
15 *identify potential maintenance concerns, Americans with*
16 *Disabilities Act compliance, and other safety concerns; review*
17 *and approval of proper California Environmental Quality Act*
18 *documents prepared for the Sisters of Mercy for work at the*
19 *designated historic property; review of final construction*
20 *documents to ensure that all requirements are met; preparation*
21 *of the right of entry permit outlining the final area of work, final*
22 *construction documents, construction plans, the contractor hired*
23 *to perform the work, insurance, bonding, provisions for damage*
24 *to state property, and inspection requirements; preparation of a*
25 *maintenance agreement outlining the Sisters of Mercy's*
26 *responsibility for long-term maintenance of the memorial due to*
27 *aging, vandalism, or relocation; and inspection of construction*
28 *performed by the contractor hired by the Sisters of Mercy; and*
29 *be it further*

30 ~~*WHEREAS, The Sisters of Mercy may establish a schedule*~~
31 *RESOLVED, That the Sisters of Mercy may establish a schedule*
32 *for the design, construction, and dedication of the memorial,*
33 *implement procedures to solicit designs for the memorial and*
34 *devise a selection process for the choice of the design, select*
35 *individuals or organizations to provide fundraising services and*
36 *to construct the memorial, review and monitor the design and*
37 *construction of the memorial and establish a program for the*
38 *dedication of the memorial, and report to the Legislature*
39 *biannually through the Assembly Committee on Rules on the*
40 *progress of the memorial notwithstanding; and be it further*

1 ~~WHEREAS, No state moneys will be expended for~~
2 ~~RESOLVED, That no state moneys will be expended for~~
3 construction of the memorial. Funds for the construction of the
4 ~~memorial will~~ *shall* be provided exclusively through private
5 contributions for this purpose; and *be it further*

6 ~~WHEREAS, If the memorial is constructed, it will be~~
7 ~~maintained with private funds contributions; now, therefore, be it~~

8 ~~RESOLVED, That if the memorial is constructed, the Sisters of~~
9 ~~Mercy shall sign a maintenance agreement with the state and~~
10 ~~maintain the memorial with private funds contributions; and be it~~
11 ~~further~~

12 ~~Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly~~
13 ~~thereof concurring,~~ That the Legislature hereby requests the
14 Department of General Services and the ~~Capitol Park Master~~
15 ~~Plan Group~~ *state review committee formed pursuant to this*
16 *measure* to approve the construction of a tribute to the Sisters of
17 Mercy in the Capitol Historic Region; and be it further

18 ~~Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of~~
19 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.